

3 inducing a flow of developer fluid across a portion of a wafer surface for a time
A1 4 interval greater than a transit time for a fluid element to reach an outer wafer edge, the time interval
cont 5 prior to substantial completion of a developing chemical reaction.

REMARKS

Election/Restrictions

Examiner Duda asserted in her action that restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. §121:

- I. Claims 1, 3 and 4, drawn to a method of dispensing inert material on a wafer, classified in class 430, subclass 322.
- II. Claim 2, drawn to a method of inducing developer flow, classified in class 430, subclass 331.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the restriction requirement on two grounds. First, Examiner Duda's characterization of the invention at I-II, above, is a mischaracterization. The claims accurately characterize themselves. On their face, the claims are drawn to methods for sequencing developer process steps, not to the methods set forth in I-II. The title of the application "Method for an Improved Developing Process in Wafer Photolithography", the summary of the invention, FIG. 23, and the detailed description, particularly from page 28, line 5 onward, buttress Applicant's contention that the invention is drawn to methods for sequencing developer process steps. As such, the claims are related. The technical results of practicing the claimed sequencing are improved wafer fabrication yields and feature resolution.

Second, even if one accepts that the characterization of the invention in I-II, above, is accurate, the claims are nevertheless related under the pertinent standard. As set forth in the official action on page 2, item 1, the rule is that inventions are unrelated if two conditions are met. Inventions are unrelated if the inventions are: i) are not disclosed as capable of use together; and ii) they have different modes of operation, different functions or different effects. In applying the rule to the application at hand, the application is clear on its face that the first condition is not met because the text from page 28, line 5 onward and FIG. 23B clearly describe disclose Invention I and Invention II as capable of use together. In particular, FIG. 23B shows, in sequential order, dispensing inert material followed by inducing developer flow (by spinning, in that embodiment).